



# 2005

# SHAWNEE COUNTY Job Vacancy Survey

Includes job vacancy  
information for  
Topeka/Shawnee County

  
**KANSAS**  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
Labor Market Information Services

in  
cooperation  
with

  
**GO TOPEKA**  
Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce

*We would like to thank the employers who took the time to respond to the Kansas Job Vacancy Survey. Without their help, this study would not have been possible. We hope to continue to partner with Kansas employers to produce and provide useful and timely workforce information that will benefit employers, job seekers and the state's workforce development efforts.*

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Governor  
State of Kansas

Jim Garner, Secretary  
Kansas Department of Labor

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*Survey forms for the 2006 Kansas Job Vacancy Survey will be mailed in April of 2006. If you are an employer that receives a survey, we want to hear from you. Your assistance in completing and returning the survey will be greatly appreciated and will allow us to produce accurate and timely workforce information that will provide comparability over the years.*

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# Survey Background

This is the second year that Labor Market Information Services (LMIS), the statistical branch of the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL), conducted an annual statewide Job Vacancy Survey. The results from this survey can be an effective tool to assess the current labor demands, assisting workforce development personnel, educators and job seekers with their planning needs.

The 2005 study for Shawnee County was the fifth annual Job Vacancy Survey conducted by LMIS to determine the number and type of job openings in the Topeka area. The survey for Shawnee County was conducted in conjunction with the statewide survey. Funding for the county survey was provided, in part, by GO Topeka, a committee of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce.

## About the Survey

Information from the 2005 Job Vacancy Survey comes from a survey of 4,681 Kansas employers conducted over a three-month period from April 5, 2005 to June 30, 2005, representing the second quarter of 2005. The sample was stratified by major industry and size class to represent the universe of employers in the five Local Areas throughout the State of Kansas. Each unit in the sample was assigned a weight that represented others in each Local Area in the same industry and of the same size. After the data collection was complete, this weight was used to determine the estimate of the number of job vacancies. Statewide, useable responses were received from 3,104 employers, a participation rate of 68 percent, resulting in statistically reliable data.

This survey revealed there were an estimated 1,955 job vacancies in Shawnee County during the second quarter of 2005.

During the months of April, May and June of 2005, the civilian labor force estimates indicated that the number of people in Shawnee County who were unemployed totaled 4,854, 4,923 and 5,329 respectively. This translates into an average of more than 2.5 unemployed people for every job vacancy.

The complete publication, titled the *2005 Kansas Job Vacancy Survey*, includes statewide data and data for five Local Areas. This publication and the methodology report is available on the KDOL Web site at [www.dol.ks.gov](http://www.dol.ks.gov).

In order to obtain data for Shawnee County, the sample included 376 establishments in the county, using the same stratification and weighting method mentioned above. Usable responses were received from 271 employers in Shawnee County, resulting in a satisfactory response rate of 73.6 percent.

Employers surveyed were asked to provide information on current job vacancies at the time of the survey, therefore these estimates are considered as point-in-time estimates. Survey respondents were requested to report job titles, including the number of job vacancies for which they were recruiting. For each job title, they also were asked to provide education and experience requirements, wages and benefits offered and the length of time job vacancies had been open.

## Job Vacancy Rate

One measure of the workforce demand included in this analysis is the job vacancy rate. This rate is a computation of the number of job vacancies as a percent of all filled positions. The job vacancy rate is a useful measure because the number of job vacancies alone does not provide any information about the demand relative to the size of the occupation or industry. To better analyze this data, the job vacancy rate must be taken into consideration. For example, the occupation of cashiers, with 34 estimated openings, is one of the top 25 occupations with the most job vacancies in Shawnee County (Table 2). The estimated employment in Shawnee County for this occupation is 2,100, resulting in a job vacancy rate of only 1.6 percent. This means that for every 100 filled positions there is more than one and one-half vacancies in the county.

The average job vacancy rate across all occupations in Shawnee County for the second quarter of 2005 is two percent, or two job vacancies for every 100 filled positions.

# Job Vacancies by Occupation

The job titles were coded into 821 detailed occupations, within 22 major occupational groups, using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System.

The occupational group with the largest number of job vacancies is Office and Administrative Support, with 250 openings and a job vacancy rate of 1.3 percent. The occupational group with the highest job vacancy rate is Life, Physical and Social Science, with a rate of 11.7 percent and 116 openings. The Transportation and Material Moving occupational group, with 236 openings and a 4.2 percent job vacancy rate, is not far behind.

The major occupational group with the highest average wage offer is Management, at \$29.00 an hour, followed by Production, at \$20.20 an hour.

The Office and Administrative Support group includes the following occupations listed among the top 25 occupations on Table 2:

- Customer service representatives
- First-line supervisors or managers of office and administration
- Executive secretaries and administrative assistants
- Bookkeeping, accounting and auditing clerks

The Life, Physical and Social Science group includes the occupation of market research analysts listed among the top 25 occupations on Table 2.

The Transportation and Material Moving group includes the following occupations listed among the top 25 occupations on Table 2:

- Drivers/sales workers
- Truck drivers, light or delivery service
- Truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer
- Laborers and freight, stock and material movers
- Packers and packagers, hand

**Table 1**  
**Job Vacancies by Major Occupational Group**

Major Occupational Group	Number of Vacancies	Job Vacancy Rate	Average Wage Offer
<b>All Job Vacancies</b>	<b>1,955</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>\$11.57</b>
Office & Administrative Support	250	1.3%	\$ 9.09
Transportation & Material Moving	236	4.2%	\$ 8.79
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	230	3.4%	\$18.51
Food Preparation & Serving-Related	200	2.8%	\$ 5.73
Sales & Related	176	2.1%	\$ 6.96
Life, Physical & Social Science	116	11.7%	\$11.54
Healthcare Support	106	3.1%	\$ 9.64
Business & Financial Operations	97	2.1%	\$18.10
Education, Training & Library	95	1.8%	\$17.43
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	87	2.0%	\$13.09
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	79	3.2%	\$ 6.91
Construction & Extraction	75	1.8%	\$11.21
Management	63	1.2%	\$29.00
Computer & Mathematical	28	1.3%	\$19.93
Personal Care & Service	26	1.0%	NA
Architecture & Engineering	23	1.4%	\$18.11
Protective Service	21	0.9%	NA
Production	17	0.3%	\$20.20
Community & Social Services	13	0.7%	\$11.61
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	13	0.9%	\$16.57
Legal	4	0.4%	\$16.15
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	0	0.0%	NA

NA: Not available - Data were not available or not reportable due to failure to meet reliability standards.

Note: The average wage offer is calculated from wages reported by employers who provided wage information for their job openings.

Table 2

**Top 25 Occupations with the Most Job Vacancies**

Job Title	Number of Vacancies	Job Vacancy Rate	Average Wage Offer
Retail Salespersons	120	4.1%	\$ 6.91
Registered Nurses	99	3.4%	\$20.87
Customer Service Representatives	94	4.6%	\$ 8.31
Food Preparation Workers	91	22.2%	\$ 5.79
Market Research Analysts	83	51.9%	\$ 9.65
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	76	12.1%	\$13.00
Waiters & Waitresses	72	4.7%	\$ 5.15
Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	61	17.9%	\$ 6.15
Drivers/Sales Workers	58	20.7%	NA
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	57	3.7%	\$ 9.34
Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Service	56	7.8%	\$ 7.00
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers, Hand	56	4.8%	\$ 9.48
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	44	7.7%	\$12.99
Carpenters	44	10.2%	\$10.00
Dental Hygienists	42	NA	\$19.23
Home Health Aides	38	5.7%	\$ 8.71
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Office & Administration	36	2.7%	\$15.22
Packers & Packagers, Hand	36	4.6%	\$ 9.06
All Other Business Operations Specialists	34	4.6%	NA
Cashiers	34	1.6%	\$ 6.37
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	29	3.5%	\$11.40
Executive Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	28	1.2%	\$12.69
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	26	1.5%	\$ 6.00
Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	24	1.7%	\$ 8.06
All Other Helpers, Construction Trades	22	NA	\$ 9.00

NA: Not available - Data were not available or not reportable due to failure to meet reliability standards.

Note: The average wage offer is calculated from wages reported by employers who provided wage information for their job openings.

The occupation with the highest job vacancy rate is market research analyst with 83 openings, resulting in a 51.9 percent job vacancy rate.

Other occupations with a high job vacancy rate include food preparation workers, at 22.2 percent; drivers and sales workers, at 20.7 percent; landscaping and groundskeeping workers, at 17.9 percent; automotive service technicians and mechanics, at 12.1 percent; and carpenters, at 10.2 percent. The number of job openings for landscaping and groundskeeping workers may be due to the timing of the survey as the lawn and garden season began in the spring.

Sixty-eight percent of the job vacancies in the Topeka area are considered to be full-time positions. Ninety-two percent of the positions open-for-hire are considered permanent positions.

The occupation with the most job vacancies in Shawnee County is retail salespersons, with an estimated 120 job openings and a job vacancy rate of 4.1 percent.

The Health Care and Social Assistance industry reported the most job openings in Shawnee County (Table 3), therefore, it is not surprising to see occupations such as registered nurses, nursing aides, orderlies and attendants, licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, dental hygienists and home health aides appear among the top 25 occupations.

The top 25 occupations with the most job vacancies in Shawnee County account for 70 percent of total job vacancies across the county.

Registered nurses, at \$20.87 an hour, is the occupation with the highest average wage offer. Six of the top 25 occupations offer an average wage of more than \$12.00 an hour.

**Job Description for Market Research Analyst —** Research market conditions in a local, regional or national area to determine potential sales of a product or service. Gather information on competitors, prices, sales and methods of marketing and distribution. Use survey results to create a marketing campaign based on regional preferences and buying habits.



# Job Vacancies by Industry & Size

**Table 3**  
**Job Vacancies by Industry**

Other ways to analyze the number of job openings and the job vacancy rate are comparison by industry and size.

The industry with the most job vacancies is Health Care and Social Assistance, with 433 job vacancies and a 2.6 percent job vacancy rate. The industry with the highest job vacancy rate is Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, with a rate of 13.3 percent, and six openings.

The Utilities industry, at \$27.56 an hour, has the highest average wage offer.

The total job vacancy rate by industry and size is 2.1 percent. This rate differs slightly from the two percent job vacancy rate by occupation. This difference is due to the fact that the employment estimates are produced using different methodologies.

Industry	Number of Vacancies	Job Vacancy Rate	Average Wage Offer
<b>All Job Vacancies</b>	<b>1,955</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>\$11.57</b>
Health Care & Social Assistance	433	2.6%	\$14.28
Retail Trade	316	3.0%	\$ 8.26
Government	237	1.9%	\$13.91
Accommodation & Food Service	167	2.6%	\$ 5.46
Manufacturing	158	2.1%	\$14.81
Finance & Insurance	147	2.8%	\$ 9.31
Educational Service	125	1.8%	\$16.14
Construction	95	2.0%	\$10.48
Information	87	3.0%	\$11.69
Wholesale Trade	78	2.3%	\$13.73
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	56	4.5%	\$ 7.00
Transportation & Warehousing	25	0.7%	\$10.28
Management of Companies & Enterprises	10	2.3%	\$14.04
Other Services, Except Public Administration	9	0.3%	\$11.45
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	6	13.3%	\$ 6.00
Utilities	6	0.7%	\$27.56
Mining	0	0.0%	NA
Professional & Technical Services	0	0.0%	NA
Administrative & Waste Services	0	0.0%	NA
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	0	0.0%	NA

NA: Not available - Data were not available or not reportable due to failure to meet reliability standards.

Note: The average wage offer is calculated from wages reported by employers who provided wage information for their job openings.

**Table 4**  
**Job Vacancies by Size**

Size	Number of Vacancies	Job Vacancy Rate	Average Wage Offer
<b>All Job Vacancies</b>	<b>1,955</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>\$11.57</b>
Very Small (0-4 employees)	333	8.1%	\$ 8.92
Small (5-49 employees)	459	1.6%	\$ 9.79
Medium (50-249 employees)	487	1.8%	\$10.36
Large (250 or more employees)	676	1.9%	\$14.45

Note: The average wage offer is calculated from wages reported by employers who provided wage information for their job openings.

Large firms with 250 or more employees represent the size class with the most job vacancies, at 676 openings. However, the job vacancy rate is the highest among very small firms, with four or less employees. The 8.1 percent job vacancy rate indicates that these firms may be having a more difficult time than larger firms finding qualified job applicants.

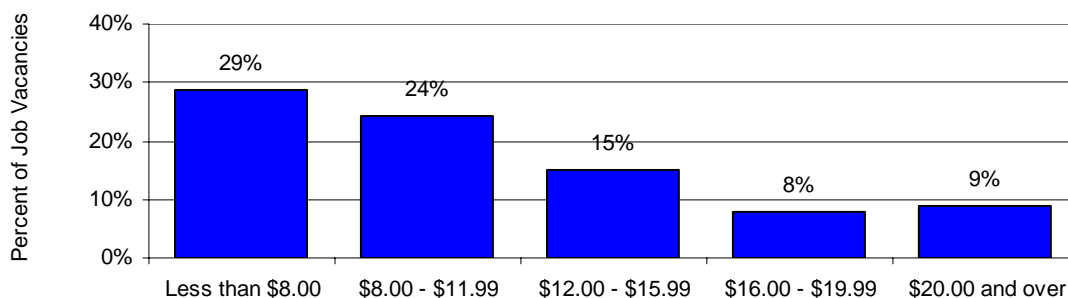
## Starting Wage Offer

The average hourly wage offer is based upon the responses employers provided to the wage offer question on the survey and does not reflect information from other sources or wages paid for currently filled positions. Some survey participants did not respond to the expected wage questions on the survey. This average also does not include wage information for any occupations paid by special pay arrangements. For example, some truck drivers are paid a certain amount per load. In addition, this figure does not include all monies received from tips for certain occupations such as waiters and waitresses.

The average wage offer for all job openings in Shawnee County is \$11.57 an hour. Thirty-two percent of all job openings in the county pay at least \$12.00 an hour.

The average hourly wage offer for full-time positions is \$13.64 and for part-time positions it is \$7.69. The average hourly wage offer for permanent positions is \$11.87 and for seasonal positions it is \$8.68.

**Graph 1**  
**Job Vacancies by Hourly Wage Range**

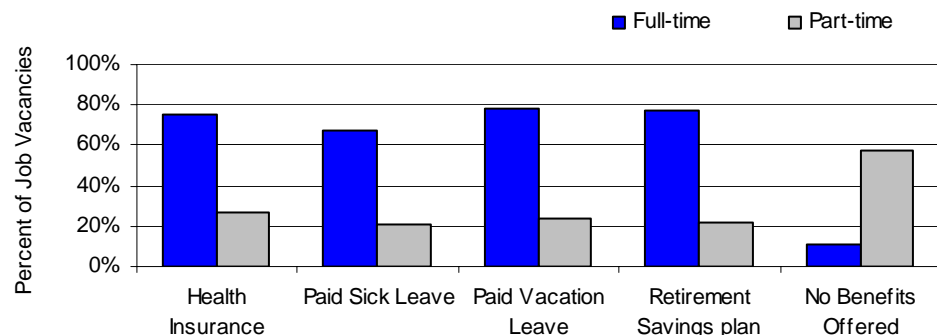


## Benefits Offered

Seventy-eight percent of the full-time job vacancies in the county offer paid vacation leave, 77 percent offer a retirement savings plan and 75 percent offer health insurance benefits. Only 11 percent of the full-time openings do not provide any benefits.

Part-time job vacancies are less likely to offer benefits. Fifty-eight percent of the part-time job openings in this county do not provide any benefits. Survey results indicate that 27 percent of the part-time positions open-for-hire offer health insurance benefits.

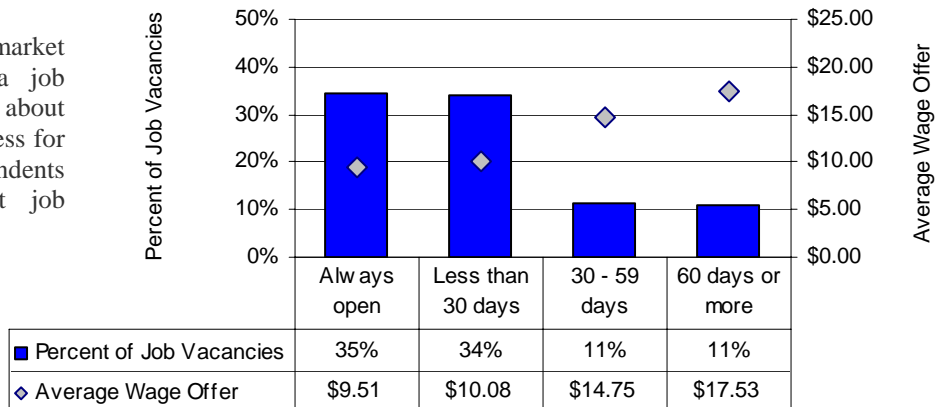
**Graph 2**  
**Job Vacancies by Type of Benefits Offered**



# Duration of Job Vacancies

**Graph 3**  
**Job Vacancies by Length of Vacancy**

Another measure of labor market dynamics is the duration of a job vacancy. To better gain knowledge about the duration of the recruiting process for certain occupations, survey respondents were asked how long current job vacancies have remained unfilled.



Results indicated that 11 percent of the job vacancies in Shawnee County have been open 60 days or more. The average wage offer for occupations open for this length of time is \$17.53 an hour.

Positions that are reported as being open 60 days or more could be an indication of the positions that are more difficult to fill. The type of work or adverse environment could be a factor in some occupations. Occupations in professional, high skilled or technical fields that have been open for 60 days or more, may indicate a shortage of qualified workers due to the specialized education or training requirements.

**Table 5**  
**Top 10 Occupations Open 60 days or More**

Job Title	Requires Bachelor or Advanced Degree	Requires License or Certificate	Requires Experience Related to the Position	Average Wage Offer
Law Teachers	100%	100%	100%	\$38.46
Purchasing Managers	100%	0%	100%	\$38.46
Registered Nurses	64%	100%	5%	\$20.87
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special & Vocational	100%	100%	100%	\$15.76
Medical & Health Service Managers	92%	100%	85%	\$18.92
Wholesale & Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products	100%	0%	100%	\$16.83
Environmental Scientists & Specialists	100%	0%	100%	\$19.00
Managers, All Other	17%	8%	92%	NA
Machinists	0%	0%	0%	\$14.42
Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	0%	0%	0%	\$ 6.15

Note: The average wage offer is calculated from wages reported by employers who provided wage information for their job openings.



Jobs in high-turnover fields may need to be refilled multiple times in a single year. The average wage offer, in addition to the education and experience requirements, are found to be lower for some occupations, such as retail salespersons, food preparation workers, waiters and waitresses, and truck drivers, light or delivery service. Also, the type of work expected could be a factor for jobs in high-turnover fields. On the other hand, some positions are always open due to a lack of qualified applicants.

Thirty-five percent of the job openings were reported as being positions that are always open where employers are continuously recruiting. The average wage offer for positions always open is \$9.51 an hour.

**Table 6**

**Top 10 Occupations Always Open**

Job Title	Requires Bachelor or Advanced Degree	Requires License or Certificate	Requires No Education	Part-Time Position	Average Wage Offer
Retail Salespersons	0%	0%	10%	92%	\$ 6.91
Food Preparation Workers	0%	0%	88%	88%	\$ 5.79
Waiters & Waitresses	0%	0%	100%	53%	\$ 5.15
Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Service	0%	0%	100%	100%	\$ 7.00
Registered Nurses	64%	100%	0%	37%	\$20.87
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	0%	58%	0%	53%	\$ 9.34
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	61%	100%	0%	20%	\$12.99
Dental Hygienists	100%	100%	0%	50%	\$19.23
Home Health Aides	0%	71%	29%	0%	\$ 8.71
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	0%	100%	0%	0%	\$13.00

Note: The average wage offer is calculated from wages reported by employers who provided wage information for their job openings.

While occupations open less than 30 days may include positions where employers have simply just started recruiting, occasionally this can be an indication of those occupations with shorter hiring cycles. These vacancies may also represent seasonal positions that need to be filled quickly.

Thirty-four percent of the job vacancies across the county were reported as being open less than 30 days. The average wage offer for these vacancies is \$10.08 an hour.

**Table 7**

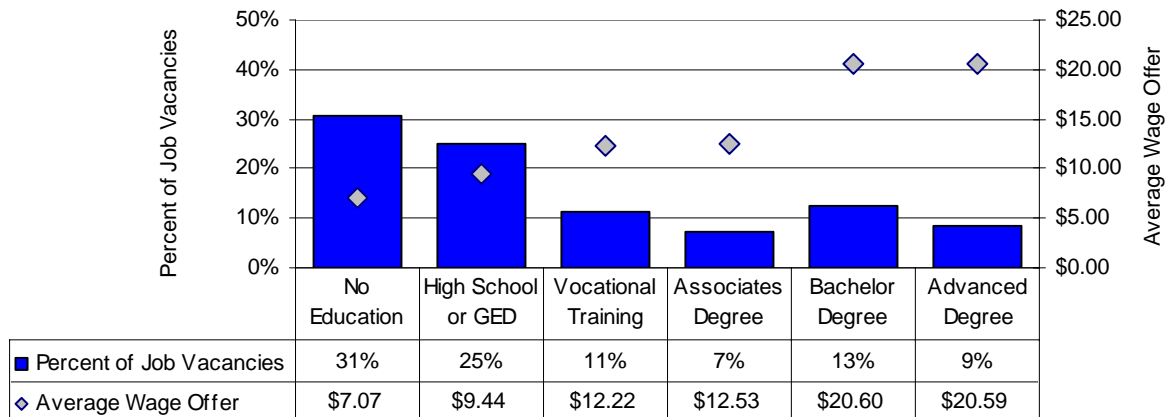
**Top 10 Occupations Open Less than 30 Days**

Job Title	Requires No Education Beyond HS	Requires No Experience	Seasonal Position
Packers & Packagers, Hand	100%	83%	83%
Customer Service Representatives	81%	2%	34%
Retail Salespersons	100%	32%	0%
Food Preparation Workers	100%	100%	0%
Market Research Analysts	0%	0%	0%
Driver/Sales Workers	100%	0%	0%
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Office & Administration	89%	0%	0%
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	100%	0%	0%
Executive Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	93%	0%	0%
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	100%	100%	0%

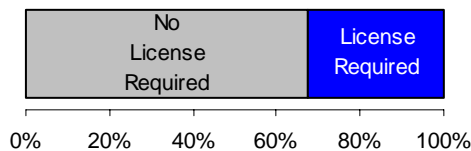
# Education & Experience

Forty percent of the positions open-for-hire require education beyond high school. The average wage offer ranges from \$12.22 per hour, for positions that require a vocational certificate, to \$20.60 an hour, for positions that require a bachelor degree.

**Graph 4**  
**Job Vacancies by Required Education**



**Graph 5**  
**Job Vacancies by License Required**

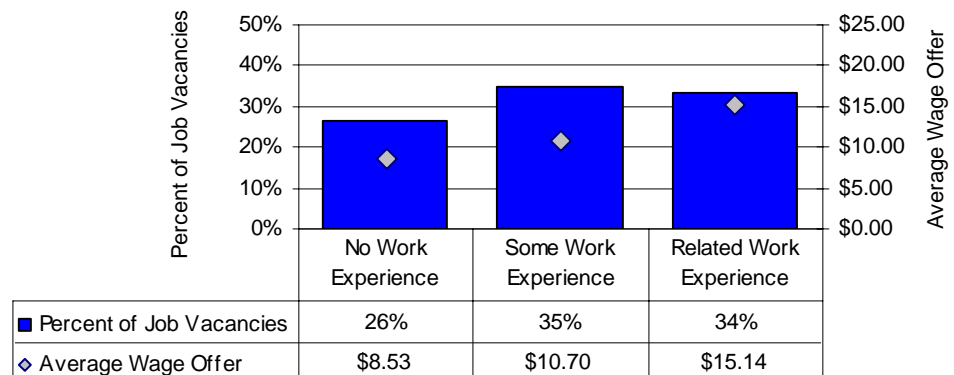


Thirty-one percent of the job vacancies require a special license or certificate. Vacancies that require a license or certificate include occupations such as registered nurses, truck drivers, nursing aides, licensed practical nurses, teachers, bus drivers and plumbers.

Fifteen percent of the job openings in the Topeka area do not require any specific education, work experience or license, labeling them as true entry-level positions.

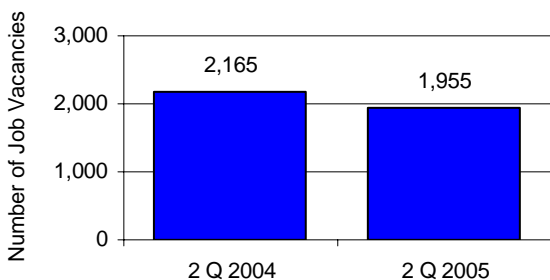
**Graph 6**  
**Job Vacancies by Required Experience**

Sixty-nine percent of the job vacancies in the county require work experience. Positions that require work experience directly related to the position have an average wage offer of \$15.14 an hour.



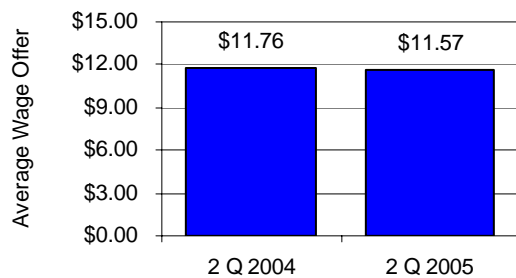
## Comparison 2004 — 2005

**Graph 7**  
**Number of Job Vacancies**



Survey results from the 2005 Job Vacancy Survey for the Topeka area remained consistent with the findings from the 2004 study.

**Graph 8**  
**Average Wage Offer**



**Graph 9**  
**Job Vacancy Rate**

